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evaluation exchange

A PERIODICAL ON EMERGING STRATEGIES IN EVALUATING CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

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from the director's desk

Heather Weiss

I have been thinking a lot lately about evaluation in a democratic society. Recent trips to India and Africa impressed on me evaluation's potential to leverage bottom-up program change and to address issues of social justice. Meanwhile, my concerns about how some evaluations of important large-scale programs in this country lacked transparency, public input, and deliberation led me to consider an issue of *The Evaluation Exchange* on participatory and democratic evaluation. Finally, *Active Liberty*, the new book by Associate Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer, helped me recognize the value of an issue devoted to the democratic purposes of evaluation. Breyer argues for bringing the Constitution's democratic objective—of supporting democratic institutions and participation—to bear in judicial interpretation and decision making. Evaluation can play an analogous role in promoting democratic processes, institutions, and participation.

The contributors to this issue ground their articles on one or more of these principles: (a) evaluation theory and practice should reflect a society that advances democracy; (b) in an evaluation context, there should be a redistribution of power relationships accomplished by "democratizing knowledge" and acknowledging the value of different types of knowing; and (c) evaluation should create a space for communication about critical issues among stakeholder groups.

By the first principle, associated with Ernest House, democratic evaluation promotes inclusion, dialogue, and deliberation. Evaluation has typically served government and funding agencies and is linked to institutional contexts of power. Democratic evaluation seeks to correct this bias by helping ordinary people gain the knowledge and voice to address an evaluation's purpose, judge a program's quality, and make recommendations. It also deepens evaluators' obligation to strive for public deliberation of evaluation findings. In our article, Kathleen McCartney and I identify the rules of evidence and appropriate use of evaluation to reduce the control of data by powerful interests in a politicized environment.

By the second principle, evaluation emphasizes inclusion by inviting the questions, ideas, and insights of nongovernmental agencies and people who are the subject of evaluations. Inclusion has the potential to promote democracy to society at large. Communities can share their experiential knowledge to improve programs and use data to hold public officials accountable.

Different approaches to evaluation have value for the different types of knowledge they generate. Scientifically based evaluations, which place a premium on experimental designs, provide an understanding about what works in programs, while other kinds of evaluations yield information about what processes and contexts make programs work. As Tim Ross points out in his article, democratic societies support different evaluation pathways to the same end: what works best for the public good.

By the third principle, evaluation encourages public conversation among stakeholders. Evaluation can learn from advances in digital society, in which people can easily access information and form networks to influence policy agendas. Organizations that make their evaluations available online, share tools with disadvantaged communities, and encourage community deliberation by experimenting with new formats such as photovoice are enhancing the communicative potential of evaluation.

Democratic evaluation still remains in the periphery of the repertoire of standard evaluation practices. I welcome your ideas on how to mainstream it in our profession.

Heather

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in this issue

Democratic Evaluation

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> theory & practice

Democratic Evaluation Approaches for Equity and Inclusion

Katherine Ryan, Associate Professor of Educational Psychology at the University of Illinois, describes three approaches to democratic evaluation and argues that they can provide field-tested methods for addressing equity and inclusion issues in evaluations of programs for children, youth, and families.

Democratic evaluation has been conducted successfully in such diverse domains as education, healthcare, and public-sector training. It particularly fits well with programs where there are issues about equity and inclusion for children, youth, and families and about how these groups might be engaged in dialogue about policy and program change. This article presents an overview of three democratic evaluation approaches, emphasizing methodology and evaluator and participant roles, and includes a brief discussion about the role of democratic evaluation approaches in programs for children, youth, and families. The three approaches are democratic evaluation, deliberative democratic evaluation, and communicative evaluation. Each of them has a set of strategies for addressing issues such as who should make policy, how to find out and represent various stakeholder groups' values, and the relative social ranking and power of stakeholders.[1]

Democratic Evaluation[2]

The democratic approach to evaluation addresses critical evaluation issues such as dealing with power relations among stakeholders, including stakeholders' perspectives, and providing useful information to programs. The primary methodology is a case study. Using this methodology, the program is viewed as a case with the evaluator representing the groups involved. The evaluator brings to the table practitioners' definitions, language, and theories about the program.[3] In addition, the case study involves a form of critical reflection whereby practitioners learn to understand themselves and others (including policymakers).

The role of the democratic evaluator as an independent knowledge broker is key to leveraging a redistribution of power relationships in an evaluation. With a commitment to serve the public (i.e., ordinary citizens, who all have different viewpoints, interested in or affected by the concerns the program addresses), the evaluator is a go-between for all groups, sharing information with them about the program. Power redistribution is accomplished by "democratizing knowledge" and holding all groups, including the client, mutually accountable. Local program knowledge is as valued (or more so) than other kinds of knowledge such as social science-based knowledge. In this procedure, program knowledge is more equally distributed than power is.[4]

Deliberative Democratic Evaluation[5]

Deliberative democratic evaluation holds that evaluation should contribute to advancing democracy in a democratic society. This approach is characterized by three principles: deliberation, inclusion, and dialogue. Deliberation is defined as reasoning reflectively about relevant issues, including identifying preferences and values of all stakeholder groups. Inclusion is defined as including all relevant interests, stakeholders, and other citizens with specific concerns. The approach is also dialogical, engaging stakeholders and evaluators

1. Ryan, K. E. (2004). Serving the public interests in educational accountability. *American Journal of Evaluation, 25*(4), 443–460.
2. MacDonald, B. (1976). Evaluation and the control of education. In D. Tawney (Ed.), *Curriculum evaluation today: Trends and implications* (pp. 125–134). London: Macmillan.
3. Simons, H. (1987). *Getting to know schools in a democracy: The politics and process of evaluation*. New York: Falmer.
4. Simons.
5. House, E., & Howe, K. (1999). *Values in evaluation and social research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

in dialogues during the evaluation process. Through dialogue, stakeholder interests, opinions, and ideas can be portrayed more accurately and completely.

Dialogues among and within stakeholder groups are potentially valuable for such important activities as defining evaluation questions, interpreting evaluation findings, making judgments, and planning responses to the evaluation findings. Key to this process is a commitment by stakeholders and other groups to put aside narrow self-interest and address issues among themselves through respectful, reciprocal, conversation-enabling deliberation. In this way, "legitimate knowledge" is broadened to incorporate views of less powerful stakeholder groups.

In deliberative democratic evaluation there is particular emphasis on finding stakeholder groups and including more of their perspectives than in a typical evaluation and ensuring these groups are represented in conversations and decisions. This work may be done in committees, focus groups, one-shot or multiple public forums, and surveys. The evaluator employs an array of mixed methods, including the methods just mentioned and others (e.g., assessments), to draw a conclusion about the program. The procedure enables issues to surface in the evaluation that may remain covered or undisclosed when implementing other evaluation approaches. This methodology requires the evaluator to promote a democratic sense of justice, be skilled at mediation, conflict negotiation, and managing groups, and be prepared to take positions on vital political and moral issues.

Communicative Evaluation[6]

Communicative evaluation is still in the early stages of development. The primary purpose of communicative evaluation is to create spaces for communication about critical issues and themes emerging from the program and its context. That is, the evaluation can be considered as a space for conversation among local stakeholder groups who also form a network for communication and ideas about evaluation issues. These locally created ideas are intended to circulate in the public discourse, such as private and public conversations, print media, organized forums (e.g., town meetings), televised reporting, and websites. Such widespread communication of ideas has the potential to lead to new or different public policies or programs.

Communicative evaluation is related to participatory action research (PAR) or self-evaluation.[7] It is characterized by shared ownership of the evaluation, a community-based view and analysis of the educational or social problem, and an orientation toward community action. There is a different kind of relationship between stakeholders and the evaluator in communicative evaluation. Using mixed methods, stakeholders become co-evaluators with the evaluator and evaluators become collaborators and co-participants with the stakeholders in improving some educational or social problem (e.g., improving family literacy). The evaluator role is no longer authoritative. In contrast to the more traditional evaluator role as "information carrier," the evaluator enables and extends communication among participants and groups. Further, communicative evaluation is not intended to replace traditional evaluation where the evaluation is designed to meet the needs of decision makers. Each of these evaluation types are best considered different lenses, each offering a unique, in-depth view of issues by considering two different images of a program from distinct perspectives.

6. Niemi, H., & Kemmis, S. (1999). Communicative evaluation. *Lifelong Learning in Europe, 4*, 55–64.

7. Kemmis, S., & McTaggart, R. (2005). Participatory action research: Communicative action and the public sphere. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Evaluating Programs for Children, Youth, and Families

Federal government policies encourage scientifically based evaluation and research that use experimental and quasi-experimental designs. The premise of scientifically based evaluation is that it creates evidence-based practices for programs that serve children, youth, and families and that these practices will translate to effective field-based practices. A claim of what works based on scientifically obtained knowledge for this diverse set of programs (such as family support, family involvement in education, early literacy, youth development, and out-of-school time programs) is a forceful argument in this climate where social and educational programs compete for scarce resources.

Scientifically based evaluation certainly provides an important understanding about what works in programs. On the other hand, historically, these kinds of evaluation results were intended for large-scale policymaking, not local decision makers and stakeholders. While the role that stakeholders' perspectives play is continually increasing in experimental design,[8] implementing a comprehensive evaluation strategy that includes other approaches is critical to increasing the knowledge base about what works in various family- and child-serving programs. Results from different kinds of program evaluations will provide different understandings about program practices.

Democratic evaluation approaches are likely to provide just this kind of different understanding. They extend the knowledge base from the lab to the field and from the experts to children, youth, families, and program practitioners. Democratic evaluation makes it possible to collect important information that scientifically based evaluation does not, including promising practices that lack an evidence base, adaptations of proven program models to local contexts, and innovations from the field.

Democratically oriented evaluations provide a means for children, youth, and families to be involved in considering what kinds of practices are effective and in evaluating these practices. They provide a set of field-tested resources for addressing equity and inclusion issues and engaging children, youth, families, and practitioners in dialogue and deliberation about programs and policies.

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8. Cook, T. D. (2002). Randomized experiments in educational policy research: A critical examination of the reasons the educational evaluation community has offered for not doing them. *Educational Evaluation & Policy Analysis, 24*(3), 175–199.

Evaluating Evaluation Data

Kathleen McCartney and Heather Weiss of the Harvard Graduate School of Education describe the conditions for evaluations to maintain scientific integrity and serve the public good despite a politicized environment.[1]

Evaluation is a powerful tool in decision making about policies and programs for children and families. When conducted within the established rules of the field, evaluation strengthens democratic principles about the public's right to know and enables us to base our deliberations about policies and programs on accurate information. However, social programs are proposed and funded through a political process and implemented and evaluated in a political climate. How then can evaluation be designed to maintain its integrity and serve the public good?

Evaluation data will always be evaluated through a political lens. But based on the past 40 years of evaluation of social programs, ranging from Head Start to DARE, we can identify at least five rules of evidence to which social scientists and policymakers can adhere to reduce the politicization of data. We also argue that social scientists and policymakers need to operate within a larger frame that emphasizes innovation and continuous improvement.

The Five Rules to Reduce Politicization of Data

1. *Use mixed-method designs.* In this climate of scientifically based research, it is important that experimental work include both main effects research questions, which pertain to universal program outcomes, and moderating effects research questions, which examine how effectiveness varies as a function of the characteristics of children and families. It is also essential to use qualitative methods, which yield valuable information about processes at work, in addition to quantitative methods.

2. *Interpret effect size in a research context.* Statistical effect size is a method for determining whether a program leads to meaningful differences in participants' lives. Effect sizes are influenced by a number of factors, including measurement and design. Moreover, there are no easy conventions for determining the practical importance of effect sizes. In medicine, researchers have tended to embrace even very small findings, while social scientists generally prefer to discuss findings with moderate effect. Researchers need to evaluate effect sizes in the context of the measures and designs used in the research—for example, by comparing a program effect with the effect of maternal education, a generally accepted predictor of child outcomes.

3. *Synthesize all research findings.* Sponsors and stakeholders often desire to bring the results of recent studies, especially large-scale ones, front and center on the policy stage. Yet a single study provides only an approximate estimate of intervention effects and may have little to say about the relation between the effect and features of the program. When a large literature on a given topic exists, then findings across studies can be brought to bear on a given question through balanced reviews of the literature; in short, more data means more knowledge.

4. *Adopt fair and reasonable scientific expectations.* It is important to have fair and reasonable scientific expectations of the extent to which the data can inform a debate or direct a political decision. For example, Lipsey found that program differences (e.g., treatment type, dosage, client type, and outcome) accounted for 25% of the variation in observed effects, while method, sampling error, and residual variance accounted for the remainder.[2] From this analysis, it is clear that we need to distinguish program effects from methodological effects. Although evaluation data can advance an argument, one must not overstate what the data can contribute to any debate.

5. *Encourage peer and public critique of the data.* Philosophers of science evaluate a work in light of the work's impact on the scientific community—the greater the impact, the greater the work's value. In order for a work to have a measurable impact, findings must be widely disseminated and subjected to professional scrutiny by peers and the public. Scrutiny is especially important amidst political debates about the meaning of data. Similarly, it is important to encourage data sharing to promote multiple independent analyses of evaluation data, especially where major policy issues are at stake and especially when the data were generated by public funds.

In addition to rules for interpreting data, we argue that a second condition must be met for evaluation to have a meaningful role in a democracy. Specifically, data need to be directed toward innovation and continuous improvement. The American approach to evaluation has been piecemeal, with relatively little emphasis on reflective learning. Today's emphasis on accountability has the potential to ameliorate this tendency—if we begin to think of evaluation as a key component in a larger, ongoing system of change. That is, evaluation helps a program clarify its theory of change and use data to gain new knowledge and also helps a program to apply this knowledge to make midcourse corrections in program design and implementation. Such a system has the potential to engage different—and especially underrepresented—stakeholders in the evaluation process and to shape policies and programs that are more representative of the citizenry.

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1. This article summarizes McCartney, K., & Weiss, H. B. (in press). Data for democracy: The evolving role of evaluation in policy and program development. In J. L. Aber, S. J. Bishop-Josef, S. Jones, K. T. McLearn, & D. D. Phillips (Eds.), *Child development and social policy: Knowledge for action.* Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. Expected publication date is July 2006. To be notified when the book is available, you can sign up for HFRP's e-news email at www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/subscribe.html.

2. Lipsey, M. W. (1997). What can you build with thousands of bricks? Musings on the cumulation of knowledge in program evaluation. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 76, 7–24.

Program Evaluation in a Democratic Society: The Vera Model

Tim Ross, Research Director at the Vera Institute of Justice, explains Vera's rigorous and multitiered data collection process and the benefits of partnerships with public programs.

A great advantage of open societies is the ability of citizens to critically evaluate government activities. The Vera Institute of Justice, a New York City-based nonprofit organization, serves as an incubator for new and innovative ideas concerning social justice. Over the last 44 years, the Vera Institute has launched dozens of demonstration programs and created 15 nonprofit organizations to serve vulnerable populations such as court-involved youth, the homeless, and children in foster care.

To evaluate its programs, Vera's research department applies rigorous social science methods using four data sources: administrative data collected by government agencies, conversations with government and nonprofit managers that implement and direct programs, discussions with frontline staff, and interviews with clients.

To gain access to agency staff and nonpublic data and facilities, Vera researchers actively work to build trusting relationships with public agency officials. Vera's evaluators frequently solicit input from government staff and ask government managers to comment on draft reports. In our experience, government officials will accept and act on the results of our research—positive or negative—as long as they understand how conclusions were made and feel that they were part of the research team. By working closely with government agencies, researchers learn more about the systems under evaluation and in turn produce better research.

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Vera's effort to overcome the bias against foster children in juvenile detention decisions provides a good example of a successful collaboration with government agencies. Family court judges, lawyers, and child welfare officials long suspected that foster children who were arrested were more likely to be sent to juvenile detention facilities than their non-foster counterparts. Vera conducted a small-scale study that suggested a bias did exist—not because foster children committed more serious offenses but because the juvenile justice system relied on parents to advocate for their children. Foster youth, in contrast to youth living with their parents, must rely on child welfare caseworkers who are unfamiliar with the juvenile justice system and often fail to appear in court.

To remedy this problem, Vera—with the support of juvenile justice, family court, child welfare, and other officials—launched Project Confirm. Project Confirm screened newly arrested youth for those in foster care, contacted the caseworkers of foster youth, and escorted them through the court process. To evaluate Project Confirm, Vera researchers used administrative data from the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, interviewed senior managers and frontline staff, and observed court hearings. The research showed mixed results. Project Confirm eliminated the foster care bias for first-time, low-level offenders after controlling for the effects of age, race, gender, and other characteristics. However, for repeat and higher level offenders, the program in fact exacerbated the bias. In these cases, caseworkers brought information—including instances of running away from foster care—that led court officials to detain youth at a higher rates than before the program.

The evaluations of Project Confirm produced three key findings.[1] First, the evaluations showed that with the proper training and support, child welfare caseworkers could reduce and even eliminate the foster care bias. This led to better outcomes for youth—namely, they kept their liberty, did not have to suffer through school interruptions while in detention, and did not lose their foster care placements. Second, reducing the foster care bias led to cost savings for child welfare, juvenile justice, and family court budgets by reducing emergency placements, juvenile detention bed days, and court hearings. Third, the foster care bias against higher level and repeat offenders occurred primarily because court officials interpreted instances of foster children leaving care without permission as an indicator of flight risk. No government databases routinely record runaway events by children who live with their parents.

Project Confirm used the results of Vera's evaluation to modify its training of court advocates, child welfare caseworkers, and family court judges. Following the evaluation, the program's demonstration period ended, and Project Confirm became part of the city's child welfare agency. Since then, Maryland, Chicago, Los Angeles, and other jurisdictions have conducted separate studies of foster care bias and in some cases have started programmatic initiatives around the same issue.

Although Vera's evaluation model has succeeded—in the case of Project Confirm and in many other instances—in improving the conditions of vulnerable populations, ours is not the only or always the best method. In democratic societies, there exist many evaluation paths to the same end: finding out what works best for citizens.

Tim Ross

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1. See Ross, T., Conger, D., & Armstrong, M. (2002). Bridging child welfare and juvenile justice: Preventing unnecessary detention of foster children. *Child Welfare, 81*(3), 471–494; and Conger, D., & Ross, T. (in press). Project Confirm: An outcome evaluation of a program for children in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. *Youth and Family Services Review*.

Getting Creative in Holding Officials Accountable

Dennis Arroyo describes the performance-monitoring mechanisms that nongovernment agencies use to make public officials accountable to citizens.

In *The Emperor's New Clothes*, a lowly child dares tell his king that he has nothing on. Today ordinary folk dare hold their kings accountable, exposing the nakedness of their rhetoric. Contrary to what policy documents say, their emperors have no roads, schools, and clinics. Nongovernment organizations (NGO) around the world are now multiplying their own *social accountability mechanisms*. These are methods by which ordinary citizens participate in exacting accountability from their officials.

Take the case of the Children's Road Survey in Bangalore, India. To curb public works corruption, the Public Affairs Centre sent children with checklists to monitor the streets of the city. The youth, aged 12 to 14 years old, were first briefed on the various critical road dimensions like the efficacy of the drainage system and impediments to safety. The children were each sent to observe 300 meters of road. Their booklets included instructions like, "Look for spots where the opening of the shoulder drain is at a higher level than the road surface (i.e., water cannot freely flow to the drain)."

The survey graphically captured the poor quality of the roads, and the children presented their findings to the Bangalore municipal commissioner at a public hearing. This made headlines in the city's newspapers. Actual improvements followed.

A key concern of NGOs that apply social accountability mechanisms is the budget for social services. Crafting the budget is not a mere academic exercise. Powerful stakeholders maneuver to control these funds, which are often misused. To safeguard the funds and programs for the public, NGOs help prepare the budget and also track and monitor program expenditures and performance.

In 2004 I did a review of social accountability mechanisms in Asia for the World Bank, covering 50 examples.[1] Following I provide a sample of these mechanisms from my own country, the Philippines.

Expenditure tracking enables citizens and groups to monitor how government and recipients of aid actually spend funds.

- *Community-driven development* combines participatory budgeting and close expenditure tracking. In the Kalahi village development program, NGOs train villagers to identify what infrastructure they need most. They are guided in preparing formal project proposals and budgets, and the best one in the municipality gets government funding. Spending is closely monitored by the general village assembly.
- *Lifestyle checks* examine the statement of assets and liabilities of public officials, which the law requires them to file every year. NGO agents verify the statements and follow up with office and house visits. If officials' assets are far greater than can be accounted for by their salaries or savings, they are investigated. Lifestyle checks led to the discovery of one president's secret mansions, and the popular outcry helped remove him from office.
- *Investigative reporting* produces in-depth articles, especially on corruption. The Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism has published close to 200 articles in major Philippine dailies and magazines. The reports on graft and influence-peddling in high places have shaken the political landscape, forcing the government to act.
- *Surveys on corruption* get data on people's first-hand experiences with fraud and identify which agencies are most prone to it. The NGO Social Weather Stations quantify the frequency of bribery in relation to paying taxes or getting licenses. The surveys also obtain data on the percentages paid to get government contracts.

Performance monitoring gets people to use data to assess the impact of public projects.

- *Procurement Watch* trains fellow NGOs on the intricacies of procurement. It sends observers, armed with checklists, to official bidding sessions. When observers discover anomalies, such as the padding of prices, they are brought to the attention of agency heads for rectification. Due to reforms in its procurement process in 2001, the Philippine Department of Education reports that their textbook prices were lowered by as much as 65%.
- *Government Watch*, an NGO, sends its volunteers to public project sites to report the deviation between documented inputs and actual results. For example, corruption in the delivery of textbooks resulted in five public school children having to share one book. Government Watch successfully partnered with the Boy Scouts to monitor textbook delivery. The shortage has since been addressed.

Information and communication technology promote accountability by collecting data on the public's scrutiny of the government.

- *SMS (short message service) databases* takes advantage of the popularity of SMS or text messages. For example, if a clerk at city hall asks for grease money, the citizen can send a text message through his or her cell phone to the hotline number of the Office of the Ombudsman. When the names of the same offenders keep appearing in the database, the claims are investigated for corrective action.

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1. Arroyo, D. (2004). *Summary paper on the stocktaking of social accountability initiatives in Asia and the Pacific*. Washington, DC: The World Bank Institute. siteresources.worldbank.org/CESILPROGRAM/Resources/459660-1108070841342/stocktaking_paper.pdf

The Many Forms of Democratic Evaluation

Ernest House, Emeritus Professor at the University of Colorado, argues that democratic evaluation calls for more ingenuity than other forms of evaluation and that as a result its methods can take many forms.

Traditionally, evaluation has been shaped by an "expert" model of decision making. The government initiates programs and sponsors their evaluation, while evaluators take direction from the decision makers, conduct the studies, and report back to the government, which takes action as it sees fit. Democratic evaluation is an attempt to make evaluation more democratic by:

- Representing a wide array of views and interests in evaluation studies
- Encouraging stakeholder participation in evaluation processes
- Providing opportunities for extended deliberation

By incorporating a broader array of views, values, and interests (often via direct participation), democratic evaluators expect studies to be better informed, accepted, and used. I favor an approach called deliberative democratic evaluation that includes all relevant stakeholders, promotes dialogue with and among stakeholders, and involves stakeholders in extended deliberation processes.

Its three key components are inclusion, dialogue, and deliberation. Inclusion means working with underrepresented and powerless groups as key stakeholders in the evaluation, not just the sponsors and powerful stakeholders; extensive dialogue increases the chances of evaluators understanding stakeholders and stakeholders understanding each other; and extended deliberation is careful reasoned discussion of issues, values, and findings by all concerned.

By incorporating a broader array of views, values, and interests (often via direct participation), democratic evaluators expect studies to be better informed, accepted, and used.

A Range of Methods

Democratic evaluation methods take many forms. For example, in a social work program in Sweden, Ove Karlsson[1] interviewed stakeholder groups—politicians, program professionals, parents, and involved youth. He presented findings of the interviews from each group to each of the other groups, collected their reactions, and presented those in turn to the others again. Finally, he gathered representatives from all groups to discuss the findings face to face. The deliberations of the meetings became part of the study.

I conducted an evaluation of a court-ordered bilingual education program in Denver that was extremely politicized. I convened a panel of lawyers and school administrators representing the contending parties in the case, designed the evaluation with their feedback, and collected data. I then presented my preliminary findings to them in face-to-face meetings twice a year, giving them chances to react to the findings and to each other, as well as to refocus the study as it progressed. Although some meetings were rancorous, the acrimony and distrust diminished over time, due to the transparency and joint deliberation.

In Britain, Ian Stronach[2] concluded an evaluation by stating his tentative findings in a survey sent to all participants. Participants were asked to respond whether they agreed with the findings and to give reasons where they did not agree. Based on this preview, Stronach revised the conclusions he presented to the sponsor in the final report. These studies featured iteration, feedback, involvement, discussion, collaboration, argument, dialogue, and deliberation, even while employing traditional social research methods.

The Importance of Ingenuity

How one democratizes an evaluation is open to the ingenuity of the evaluator, though participation should be structured carefully, in my view. For example, Jennifer Greene[3] held an open public forum on a controversial high school science program, and she reports the meeting was completely unsuccessful. Unstructured meetings are unlikely to lead to careful deliberation. Over time we hope to develop a set of procedures to complement traditional research methods. (We have provided a checklist on the website of the Evaluation Center at Western Michigan University to prompt evaluators about some things to consider. www.wmich.edu/evalctr/checklists/dd_checklist.htm)

Finally, democratic evaluation may pose a challenge to current policies. For example, in principle there is no conflict between the mandate *du jour* from Washington—randomized experiments—and democratic evaluation. One can enlist stakeholders to identify issues, select outcome variables, and help interpret findings in randomized studies. However, I suspect that one purpose of the mandate is to control studies in terms of who is involved, what variables are examined, what issues are considered, what outcomes are sought, and what interpretations are presented. (My suspicion is not an argument against randomized studies, which are valuable.) By contrast, democratic evaluation moves away from information control toward making evaluations more open and transparent.

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1. Karlsson, O. (1998). A critical dialogue in evaluation: How can interaction between evaluation and politics be tackled? *Evaluation, 2,* 405–416.

2. Stronach, I., & MacLure, M. (1997). *Educational research undone: The postmodern embrace*. Philadelphia: Open University Press.

3. Greene, J. C. (2000). Challenges in practicing deliberative democratic evaluation. *New Directions in Evaluation, 85,* 13–26.

Combining Research Rigor and Participatory Evaluation

Anju Malhotra and Sanyukta Mathur from the International Center for Research on Women describe a study in Nepal that compared participatory and more traditional approaches to evaluating adolescent reproductive health interventions.

Working with the Nepal Adolescent Project (NAP), the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) has developed a model of participatory public health intervention and evaluation intended to define and address adolescent reproductive health concerns. NAP's goals were to (a) improve youth reproductive health outcomes on indicators such as knowledge of pregnancy, STDs, HIV prevention, and other adolescent changes and problems and access to contraceptive, HIV, maternal care, and basic reproductive health services; and (b) empower youth and adults to change social norms and values on early marriage and childbearing, lack of mobility and voice for girls, and lack of opportunity and options for young women and men. The project was conducted between 1998 and 2003 in collaboration with an international service delivery organization, Nepali governmental and nongovernmental organizations, and local communities.

Comparing the Approaches

Despite its hypothesized advantages, the success of a participatory approach in reaching young people in developing countries and improving their reproductive health previously had not been scientifically tested. ICRW rigorously tested this approach through a quasi-experimental study at four sites. Two study sites, one rural and one urban, used a participatory approach for research, intervention, monitoring, and evaluation, while two control sites used more traditional reproductive health research and interventions.

Study and control sites differed in both how the program was implemented and what elements it included. The study site's intervention design and implementation were more comprehensive, inclusive, and interactive, with an emphasis on building community ownership and involvement. This was achieved through several mechanisms and structures, such as advisory groups, coordination teams, and consultative committees that engaged youth and adult community members. ICRW and partners used an action-planning process to design interventions, with communities receiving and analyzing needs assessment data and developing task forces to prioritize and design feasible interventions. Implementation structures were inclusive, facilitating adult and youth authority and decision making. Control sites lacked these mechanisms.

Intervention components at the study sites were substantially more elaborate, locally tailored, and comprehensive than at the control sites. They addressed structural, normative, and systemic barriers to youth reproductive health, while control sites addressed only the most immediate risk factors, such as STDs or unwanted pregnancies. Study site interventions tended to link direct youth reproductive health programs with other programs aimed at influencing the youth's environment, such as those addressing adult education, social norms, and economic livelihoods. In comparison, at control sites, project staff designed and implemented three standard reproductive health interventions focused on basic risk factors for disease and unintended pregnancy.

ICRW compared changes in key indicators at the control and study sites. Triangulated methodologies—quantitative, qualitative, and participatory—were used to collect data from young people, parents, other relevant adults, community leaders, and service providers.

The Results of the Approaches

The participatory approach yielded more positive results on outcomes of interest overall. While study site results were only marginally more positive on basic risk factors such as contraceptive use or reporting of STD symptoms, they were substantially more positive on broader, more fundamental determinants of youth reproductive health, such as delayed marriages, childbearing, girls' education and mobility, young men's understanding of maternal issues, and the ability of young women and men to understand and articulate the familial, power, and gender dynamics of reproductive health issues.

The participatory approach in study sites was substantially more successful in empowering youth and community members, building the capacity of local partner organizations, and laying the seeds of sustainability.

Additionally, the participatory approach in the study sites was substantially more successful in empowering youth and community members, building the capacity of local partner organizations, and laying the seeds of sustainability. Young people learned to mobilize on their own behalves, whether by organizing communication campaigns that extended beyond original program messages (e.g., to address drug and alcohol use) or fundraising for a youth center with a library. Similarly, parents and leaders acquired the information and confidence to hold service providers and politicians accountable and assert their entitlement to benefits. Local organizations acquired conceptual expertise in addition to training and tools and now are contributing to a substantial increase in development practitioners with higher skill levels. Most critically, new structures, mechanisms, and processes, such as networks of health service providers, parent committees, and legitimate social spaces for young people, now provide hope for continued and long-term action and innovation.

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Twists and Turns in the Journey: Youth Activists' Use of Research in Their Campaigns for Small Schools

Kristine Lewis shares Research for Action's experience with training youth to use social science research methods in their campaigns to improve their local high schools.[1]

In the spring of 2005, youth activists with Youth United for Change (YUC) and the Philadelphia Student Union (PSU) held a public action—an event at which a public official is asked to make a pledge of support in front of constituents—attended by over 200 students, parents, school officials, and community leaders. Four African American youth activists took center stage. Holding colorful poster boards that visually depicted their organizations' campaigns over the previous year, they explained the role that social science research had played in their pursuit of small high schools. Soon afterward the Chief Academic Officer of the Philadelphia school district made a commitment to community participation by transforming three large neighborhood high schools into several smaller, autonomous schools.

During the 2004–2005 school year and the summer of 2005, we at Research for Action—a Philadelphia-based nonprofit that engages in educational research and evaluation—trained a dozen youth activists, including those who spoke at the action, to improve their research skills. Youth learned to merge their activism with research to highlight the importance of small class sizes, safe learning environments, meaningful relationships with teachers, and a sense of community in their schools. While advancing YUC and PSU's campaigns to transform schools, we sought to better understand the contributions that youth make to social change as part of a larger study on civic engagement in Philadelphia school reform.

Youth learned to merge their activism with research to highlight the importance of small class sizes, safe learning environments, meaningful relationships with teachers, and a sense of community in their schools.

Involvement with our research project expanded the research skills of YUC and PSU's youth activists, whose organizations have a long history of working diligently to improve education in Philadelphia. At the beginning of their push for small schools, prior to their training with us, youth conducted "listening campaigns" and surveyed high school students about their ideas for the design of new high schools. They read literature about small schools, traveled to small schools in Oakland, Chicago, Providence, and New York City, and developed proposals for the future of their high schools.

Our staff began the youth activists' training by offering a day-long program that included team-building exercises and an introduction to qualitative research methods. Next, youth researchers started observing meetings with school officials and community leaders and writing field notes. They convened monthly with our staff to engage in ongoing analysis of their field notes and to discuss developments in their campaigns. During these meetings, youth supported one another and offered strategies for approaching their respective campaigns. Youth also kept journals to record their reflections on their experiences as researchers and activists. They continued to hone their skills through our 1-week summer research camp.

After developing skills for formal field-note taking, youth approached their participation in the small schools campaign through the lenses of both activist and researcher. Their newly developed ability to closely observe meetings with school officials and community leaders made them keenly aware of political relationships, power dynamics, and other patterns that had previously been hidden to them. In addition, many of the youth noticed that their research training was producing an unexpected change in their writing skills. Several youth researchers shared that their teachers had noted improvements in their writing. Youth attributed this to their involvement in the research project, remarking that they had never before written as much or as frequently.

One important product of the youth researchers' activities was a road map illustrating the evolution of their small schools campaigns. Leaders from YUC and PSU used this road map to support their presentations at the public action. In preparation for the public action, our staff also coached youth activists on their presentation skills, encouraging students to tell stories from their experiences and to draw on data highlighted on their road maps to engage the audience and bolster their case for small schools. The youth activists' work succeeded in earning them a pledge of support from the Chief Academic Officer of the Philadelphia school district.

Meanwhile, we learned several important lessons in our work with youth. First, we learned the importance of creating youth-centered contexts in which youth can reflect on their own experiences, explore research questions important to their efforts to create change, and forge alliances with other youth committed to social change. Second, we (re)learned the importance of ongoing support for the acquisition of new skills—in this case the skills of research and reporting. This ongoing support takes shape in the form of strong relationships and trust between adults and youth and among youth themselves. Our staff members hope that the continued fusion of research and activism will help youth mobilize a power base and infuse their voices into decision-making processes that impact their future.

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1. Research for Action's work with youth is funded by the Goldsmith-Greenfield Foundation, Mott Foundation, and Surdna Foundation. Special thanks to the youth activists and adult leaders with Youth United for Change and the Philadelphia Student Union, as well as members of the Research for Action staff.

A conversation with

Jennifer Greene

Jennifer Greene is a professor in the Department of Educational Psychology in the College of Education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her research focuses on the intersections between social science and social policy and emphasizes evaluation as a venue for democratizing dialogue about critical social and educational issues. Through her work in educational and social program evaluation, she seeks to advance the theory and practice of alternative forms of evaluation, including qualitative, participatory, and mixed-method evaluation.

Q You write about evaluation as a force for democratizing public conversations about important public issues. What do you mean by this?

A I refer primarily to the inclusion of more stakeholder perspectives, interests, concerns, and values than are normally included in public conversations. While I don't think there are efforts to exclude people, the policy and academic conversations—or access to these conversations—are usually dominated by people in positions of authority and power. The public conversations tend to reflect these interests and are not necessarily inclusive of the interests of other people who are normally not part of the conversation.

I use the phrase *democratic pluralism* to capture three leverage points for being as inclusive as possible in an evaluation. First is inclusion in setting the evaluation agenda, that is, the questions and concerns to be addressed in an evaluation. Second is establishing criteria for judging quality. How are we going to know if this is a good program? I think that these types of judgments are often defined by default and that we need to include more people in the conversations about what constitutes a good program. A third point of leverage is interpreting results and whatever action implications might follow from them.

Related Resources

Greene, J. (2000). Challenges in practicing deliberative democratic evaluation. *New Directions for Evaluation, 85*, 13–26.

Greene, J. C., Millett, R. A., & Hopson, R. H. (2004). Evaluation as a democratizing practice. In M. T. Braverman, N. A. Constantine, & J. K. Slater (Eds.), *Foundations and evaluation: Contexts and practices for effective philanthropy* (pp. 96–118). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Greene, J. C. (in press). A value-engaged approach for evaluating the Bunche-Da Vinci Learning Academy. *New Directions for Evaluation*.

Q How does the theory of democratic evaluation connect with practice?

A Overall, there's a lot more theorizing about, than implementation of, approaches that could be specifically labeled *democratic*. I think one of the important reasons for this is that the democratic approaches to evaluation are less about particular methods or strategies or tools—the usual technical aspects of evaluation—and more about evaluator roles, stances, and value commitments. I've grouped these other aspects of evaluation into two clusters: one on the positioning of evaluation in society (for example, issues about whose interests are addressed, what's the purpose of the evaluation) and the other about the character of evaluation practice—meaning the kinds of relationships that are established in the field between the evaluator and stakeholders and the kinds of interactions and communications the evaluator strives to have among stakeholders.

If you take the House and Howe approach of democratic deliberative evaluation as an example, they feature processes of dialogue and deliberation.[1] These are processes about communication, about learning from other people, about voice, about positioning. They are not methods. What democratic evaluation is endeavoring to accomplish is much harder to make concrete, put into practice, and be reflective about.

Q How does participatory evaluation differ from democratic evaluation?

A In participatory approaches, there's an effort to involve the people being studied as co-evaluators, as a way of enabling them to assert their voice and views and as a capacity-building effort. Democratic evaluation is not a participatory process in the sense that members of the setting are involved as co-evaluators. That's an important distinction. Democratic evaluation is inclusive in the points of leverage I mentioned: setting the agenda, ascertaining quality, and interpreting results.

1. For more information on this approach see the article by Ernest House on page 7 of this issue.

Those are parts of an evaluation process in which one needs to be as pluralistic and inclusive as possible. But that's not the same as having people work alongside the evaluator as co-evaluators.

Q What do you think are some of the challenges of implementing democratic evaluation?

A One big challenge is just the acceptability of an approach to evaluation that is more explicitly values-engaged or ideological in its orientation. This contrasts with the general image of evaluation as an objective, fair, neutral, impartial process that renders judgments of truth. So there's a considerable challenge to the acceptability of this approach as a viable way of doing evaluation. It's a challenge to persuade people who commission evaluations that it's in their interest to share power more equitably with program staff and beneficiaries. It's also difficult to persuade program staff who have very full agendas as well as people who are the intended beneficiaries of a program that it's in their interest to participate. There are many instances of offers of help to people who are on the margins of our society, and then that help is not forthcoming.

Jennifer Greene

Democratic evaluation is a very demanding process for participants and the evaluator. I wonder whether it's feasible in large-scale, multisite evaluations, and even in a statewide evaluation of a program. I see it as challenging in terms of resources and time. There are lots of lofty words and concepts thrown around, but making them concrete and enacting them in a particular context remains challenging.

I also think there is a tension between commitments to inclusion, pluralism, participation, and democratization of agendas on one side, and methodological quality on the other side. Many years ago, I set up a very inclusive process in an attempt to establish evaluation questions with people in the community, and the questions that were generated through this highly democratic process were not the kinds of questions that would serve the program or any stakeholder's interests very well. I learned a lot from that one! There's a tension between being democratic and trying to do good work in terms of methodological soundness. It's an inherent tension that just perhaps needs to be acknowledged as part of the practice. Not necessarily resolved, but acknowledged.

Q So how do you prepare evaluators to apply democratic principles in their work?

A I don't think our typical evaluation training programs have anything in them that would help us do this. Evaluators typically don't have in their background engagement with theories of democracy, considerations of what it means to be democratic and the challenges thereof, and issues of social justice. I don't think we can carefully use democratic approaches without serious thought for ourselves about what that means.

Democratic evaluation also draws on all the group process skills, such as facilitation and communication. The evaluator is expected to run a deliberative forum where people bring their own concerns and interests to a common place—and it needs to be a place where people feel safe to express what's on their mind. Evaluators don't have the training background that gives them the expertise to do this, and facilitation becomes an enormously difficult challenge.

So, democratic evaluators need reading, contemplation, and practice with the weighty concepts associated with democracy and with the process skills so central to the actual practice of this approach.

Q What can be done to advance the practice of democratic evaluation?

A I think evaluation always advances some particular set of values and somebody's interests and not others'. A pluralistic, inclusive set of values, as a minimum definition of democracy, is the most defensible. I definitely think it's important to advance democratic evaluation.

First of all, it needs to be legitimized. Any approach to evaluation that is explicitly values-engaged in some way remains on the fringe of practice. That was true for qualitative approaches to evaluation for quite some time, and we had long debates about interpretive methodologies and different approaches to data gathering and interpretation. I would say that, within the field as a whole, both in theory and practice, qualitative methodologies and qualitative approaches have been legitimized. That doesn't mean everybody in the community accepts them, but certainly, they're widely legitimized. I think that the same legitimization is entirely possible for democratic evaluation approaches. It will just take time.

The second thing that I think is extremely important is to provide some empirical evidence for the claims of these theories. Brad Cousins has written a wonderful empirical summary of the evidence about participatory evaluation and the claims in that tradition of the link between stakeholder participation and utilization of the evaluation results.[2] That kind of empirical work needs to be done in democratic evaluation so that all those gaps between theory and practice are narrowed. We don't have an empirical literature, just a few scattered studies. I think what's needed is an extensive effort to try these theories in practice, do good data-gathering about what is happening, and build a body of evidence that can support, or not support, the theories in practice.

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2. Cousins, J. B. (2003). Utilization effects of participatory evaluation. In T. Kellaghan & D. Stufflebeam (Eds.) *International handbook of educational evaluation* (pp. 245–267). Boston: Klewer.

Democratic Evaluation in Practice

Cheryl MacNeil, an evaluation consultant, describes the asymmetries of power in evaluation and her efforts to make her evaluation practice more democratic.

My evaluation practice is democratic. I pay attention to power—the power of stories, the power of values, the power of having a voice, the power that some people have over others, and the power of coming to better understand how we know what we know. As such, I choose to participate in practice-oriented evaluation, in which program stakeholders come together to consider the language they are using and how it reflects who has power and to offer their experience-based knowledge.[1]

Attending to the Storyline

In the mental health programs I evaluate, as is the case with other social programs, professional language frames conversation. The program stakeholders often talk about the field's need for oversight, regulation, medication, and specialized relationships and in doing so, create storylines about deficiencies. Approaching evaluation with a critical lens, I lead participants in questioning how powerful entities—like professional communities, insurance companies, the pharmaceutical industry, and the government—influence these storylines.[2] I highlight the existence of the dominant discourses and structure evaluation questions guided by more than just the language and activities of expert-driven narratives. The problem is not that dominant discourse-driven storylines have nothing to offer; the problem rests in their dominance over other conversations.

In response to this problem, I practice inclusion. I create opportunities to shine light on shadowed narratives by using the frameworks of democratic evaluation.[3] I do this by inviting into the conversation not just experts but those with practical experience—program participants, direct line workers, family members, friends, and neighbors. I bring them to the table to share their contextualized knowledge with professionals, and I encourage these different social actors to talk about their contrasting assumptions. In short, I promote dialogue and deliberation. Adding new voices to the mix inevitably creates a contrast between dominant and shadowed narratives and brings balance to the dominant storylines. When done well, this transformative process catalyzes larger conversations around issues of social justice.

On a practical level, I offer program participants opportunities to experience democratic evaluation in a variety of ways and at different points in time during the evaluation process. Often, the design phase is the most important time to be inclusive because this is when I negotiate what is important to know and how to go about learning it. Having different stakeholders deliberate about the focus of the evaluation helps to create a balance in whose information needs are being met and sets the tone for the forthcoming evaluation activities. I sometimes find it useful to establish forums for deliberation among program stakeholders to explore specific issues.[4] At other times, I become a participant observer in the program community and raise reflective questions or bring attention to provocative points of view. In other instances, I simply encourage program participants to discuss their different values with one another. Always, the primary evaluation activities are dialogue and deliberation.

Relearning the Evaluation Process

Many of the program participants with whom I work have little lived experience with deliberative evaluation practices; most have encountered only minimally inclusive evaluation practices. Typically, decision makers unfamiliar with deliberative evaluation practices ask me to design an instrument that I can use to collect data and then write a report with prescriptive recommendations. I counter such suggestions by offering to be a steward of a deliberative process.[5] I suggest an evaluation designed to bring together people from different walks of life to publicly share thoughts, collectively learn, and maybe even enter into an advanced moral conversation.

Within every program, there is always some relearning to do. I play the role of teacher and help participants understand that democratic evaluation is practical and practice-oriented and that it will probably look and feel very different from past evaluation experiences. It may even contradict some of the messages participants have received in their professional training. Democratic evaluation does not call on us to be detached during our inquiry processes, nor does it encourage aloof conversations among professionals. As a democratic evaluator, I seek to bring the conversation into the personal and to guide people into mutually responsible and authentic dialogue.

I experience most success with democratic evaluation when working with learning organizations that actively question the status quo and value critical examination of their partnerships. These organizations honor the opinions of the people they serve and make accommodations to elevate their voices into substantive conversations. They have genuine concern for the problems that their programs address and about the consequences of their actions. Bringing the art of deliberative democratic evaluation into the cultures of these programs is sometimes a struggle, but in the end, it is also a humanizing experience that helps to improve social programs.

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Social Capital in the Connected Society

Andrew Nachison, director of the Media Center, an organization that studies the intersection of media, technology, and society, writes about social capital and democratic processes in a digital society.

When Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) turned to the American Red Cross for a variety of disaster relief services, such as running shelters and distributing food and water to evacuees. One of FEMA's requests was unexpected, and the Red Cross had to quickly assemble experts and tools to respond to it: FEMA asked the Red Cross to set up Internet kiosks and computer networks in shelters so that evacuees could go online.

In the aftermath of the hurricane, the Internet became a disaster lifeline for evacuees. Internet kiosks in shelters served as communications gateways through which individuals displaced by Katrina could attempt to find both services and family members. Websites set up by the Red Cross, other relief organizations, and the mainstream media shared online space with new sites such as Katrina Aftermath, an open "mobcast" created by online activist Andy Carvin, on which people displayed photos, missing person notices, personal stories, and commentary about Katrina. Carvin called the site a mobcast because he allowed anyone to post text, audio, images, and video on it. Built literally overnight by one man, the Katrina Aftermath site quickly became a resource for tens of thousands of people.[1]

Katrina wreaked havoc but also revealed extraordinary changes taking place within a society increasingly connected by digital networks. At this moment in human history, individuals possess an unprecedented capacity to access, share, create, and apply information. Today's virtual, digital mediascape frees information from physical boundaries and facilitates the creation of what Robert Putnam calls *social capital*—the value of who we know and what we do with those relationships.[2] Until very recently, who we knew was primarily a factor of where we lived, but in a connected society of global nomads, our social capital has the capacity to expand through vast personal networks that span the globe.

Think of social capital as influence. The South Korean website OhmyNews, launched in 2000, lets anyone report the news, and 38,000 "citizen journalists" have since rocked a nation that had been dominated by conservative, tightly controlled commercial media, most notably a handful of national newspapers.[3] Citizen journalists reporting for OhmyNews gave voice to and mobilized young and dissatisfied voters. Political observers credit OhmyNews with influencing the election victory of President Roh Moo-Hyun in February 2003.

As this example from South Korea demonstrates, the notion of informational dominance is obsolete, or less coherent, in a connected society. Individuals now exert unprecedented power and control over how and when they access information and with whom they share it. In this sense, the Internet is profoundly disruptive to the interests of any institution premised on power and control.

Built a decade ago around a set of computer networking standards that made it simple to hyperlink from any file on the network to any other, the Internet now enables financial transactions and human collaboration that in many respects have superseded communities and relationships built strictly around geography. Today, we see emerging communities formed around personal interests, as well as a continuing cycle of innovation that puts digital tools and capabilities into the hands of almost everyone.

Individuals now exert unprecedented power and control over how and when they access information and with whom they share it. In this sense, the Internet is profoundly disruptive to the interests of any institution premised on power and control.

These new tools allow for greater communication between individuals and communities online and generate new ways to create and measure "buzz"—discussions among those who set or influence trends, decisions, and public discourse. For a new breed of online publishers who take advantage of powerful and inexpensive Web log (i.e., blog) publishing tools, buzz—like social capital—is measured by the way ideas flow from and between different nodes on the network—in other words, by Web links.

Will technology lead us to an information utopia? The long-term consequences of living in a connected society are uncertain. Information overload may render the ever-expanding volume of data on the Web impenetrable and consequently ignored by most people. In addition, global communications networks are tools for everyone—including terrorists, who distribute execution videos through websites, and criminals, who steal personal data and exploit online security holes to commit fraud. Moreover, buzz alone may not be an adequate measure of efforts to prevent AIDS, malaria, or war.

We can only imagine and hope that as access to information expands, along with the capacity to create, share, and apply it, that so too will freedom, democracy, prosperity, and peace, and that, on a smaller scale, communications technology will enable solutions to social, health, economic, and human rights problems worldwide.

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1. The Katrina Aftermath website is katrina05.blogspot.com.
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3. The OhmyNews English-language website is english.ohmynews.com.

Using Democratic Evaluation Principles to Foster Citizen Engagement and Strengthen Neighborhoods

Arnold Love and Betty Muggah describe how Hamilton Community Foundation applied democratic evaluation principles to transform challenged neighborhoods into vibrant communities.

Building a healthy and vibrant community that includes all residents—whether impoverished, unemployed, struggling to adjust to a new country, or marginalized in some other way—is a daunting task and endless challenge, especially for a community foundation. Established in 1954, Hamilton Community Foundation (HCF) is one of the oldest and largest of Canada's community foundations. In recent years, HCF has been increasingly interested in strengthening neighborhoods, fostering leadership, and building capacity among local networks and grassroots organizations.

HCF's Growing Roots . . . Strengthening Neighbourhoods Program began in 2003 as a 5-year pilot project to help the residents of four challenged neighborhoods—neighborhoods with high levels of poverty, unemployment, and single-parent families and low levels of education—identify and implement projects that will improve their quality of life. The program seeks to build assets by creating opportunities for residents to gain leadership skills and increase the organizational and leadership capacities residing in the neighborhoods.[1]

To assist with this process, the program employs a full-time community-development worker who outreaches and engages neighborhood residents, develops long-term relationships with neighborhood groups, and offers these groups hands-on technical assistance in planning and organizing activities. A key component of asset building is providing small grants for projects that develop a neighborhood's assets, benefit the neighborhood, and contribute to tangible improvements in the quality of life of residents. For example, small grants may be given to help residents and neighborhood groups plan a "mom and tots" play group/coffee club, start an after school program, or beautify the neighborhood.

The Growing Roots . . . Strengthening Neighbourhoods Program adopted a community development approach to evaluation. In this model, evaluation supports the democratic evaluation principles of inclusion, participation, dialogue, and action in several ways: by documenting the local issues and outcomes that are important to the residents, by creating opportunities to deliberate together and practice direct democracy, by mobilizing partnerships and networks to generate solutions, and by identifying the current assets and additional resources that will create positive outcomes for challenged neighborhoods and their residents.

As an example, the recent interim program evaluation gave both individual residents and neighborhood groups the opportunity to document what had changed in their lives and their neighborhoods as a result of participating in the program. Residents and neighborhood groups considered what assets the program was helping to build, what aspects of the program were working well, what needed to be changed, what were the major challenges still facing the four communities, and what elements of the program were transferable to other neighborhoods. Children and youth, as well as their parents and other members of the community, participated fully in the evaluation process.

The Growing Roots . . . Strengthening Neighbourhoods evaluation approach had three elements:

1. ***Deepen residents' understanding of the assets and strengths of their neighborhoods through a participatory assets-mapping approach.*** Following the assets-mapping process,[2] neighborhood residents and the Growing Roots . . . Strengthening Neighbourhoods program coordinator came together to discuss and identify neighborhood assets and draw them on a map. Next, community meetings served as a forum for discussing assets and revising the maps. Finally, Geographic Information System software mapped the assets digitally and integrated them with demographic data for presentation to the community.

2. ***Evaluate the outcomes and achievements of neighborhood residents in their own voices.*** Photovoice was the core evaluation technique used to evoke stories and narrative data from residents and

Children show their pride in their ability to help beautify the Hamilton community by building a window box.

1. Kretzmann, J. P., & McKnight, J. L. (1997). *Building communities from the inside out: A path toward finding and mobilizing a community's assets*. Skokie, IL: ACTA Publications.

2. Green, G. P., & Haines, A. (2001). *Asset building and community development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

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neighborhood groups. This combination of photography and storytelling has proven to be a very effective technique for obtaining credible evaluation data, as well as a useful platform for subsequent reflection and community building. During the last decade, photovoice has been increasingly recognized as a tool to enable community residents to record, reflect, and communicate their assets and concerns and to educate community leaders about issues from a grassroots perspective.[3]

A senior staff member from a community agency with experience using photovoice methodology interviewed residents participating in the Growing Roots . . . Strengthening Neighbourhoods Program, including children and youth, and recorded their responses to the evaluation questions. The interviewer was accompanied by a photographer who took photos meant to capture the views expressed during the interviews and the outcomes and other achievements resulting from the program.

3. Public validation and democratic deliberation of evaluation findings. To complement the photovoice methodology, the program coordinator added findings from the assets-mapping process, statistical information about program participants and activities, and mini-evaluations done by each group at the end of its project. The program coordinator then integrated this data with the photovoice images and stories that best captured the findings.

The resulting presentation served as a focal point around which to convene community residents, the Neighbourhoods Program Advisory Committee, Hamilton Community Foundation staff and board members, and other members of the community as they came together to validate the findings in a public forum, hear suggestions for improvement, and discuss the lessons learned from the program and how it might be transferred to other Hamilton neighborhoods. Participants also received a brochure summarizing the findings and a copy of the *Neighbourhood Newsletter* that presented photos and evaluation stories from each neighborhood.

This democratic approach to program evaluation has significant advantages. First of all, the evaluation process is grounded in the experiences and viewpoints of neighborhood residents and neighborhood groups. As a result, they have a strong voice in telling their stories about the program, talking about the difference it has made in their lives, and coming together to publicly validate the findings. Secondly, residents' and community groups' participation in this democratic process results in evaluation feedback that strengthens HCF's program-planning and grant-making activities. Finally, at a strategic level, evaluation informs HCF's policies and strategies for strengthening Hamilton's neighborhoods, builds its knowledge about supporting community-based development, and provides valuable feedback about ways it can assume a leadership role in building the assets for and generating solutions to the core issues facing Hamilton's most challenged neighborhoods.

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3. Wang, C., Yuan, Y. L., & Feng, M. L. (1996). Photovoice as a tool for participatory evaluation: The community's view of process and impact. *Journal of Contemporary Health*, *4*, 47–49.

HFRP Resources on Youth Engaged for Action

- **"Youth Engaged for Action,"** a new article to appear in *Prevention Researcher,* describes how out-of-school time (OST) programs can promote youth involvement in civic action by focusing on four interrelated programmatic strategies: establishing organizational readiness that fosters engagement, promoting youth–adult partnerships, engaging youth as leaders and decision makers, and involving youth in research and evaluation. To be notified of the release of the *Prevention Researcher* article, sign up for our OST updates email at www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/subscribe.html.
- *The Issues and Opportunities in Out-of-School Time Evaluation* brief, ***Youth Involvement in Evaluation and Research***, draws on information collected from focus group interviews with representatives of 14 programs that are involving youth in their evaluation and research efforts. It examines the elements of successful youth involved research projects and offers short profiles of the 14 organizations included in the study. www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/resources/issuebrief1.html
- We offer a list of over three dozen **community youth development and youth civic engagement resources** related to engaging youth for democratic action on our website. www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/resources/other.html

Untangling Logic Models and Indicators: Reflections on Engaging Stakeholders

Seema Shah, a researcher at the Institute for Education and Social Policy, shares her experience of engaging community organizing groups to develop a logic model on how community organizing leads to better student outcomes.

Three years ago, the Institute for Education and Social Policy at New York University undertook the massive project of studying community organizing efforts on school reform in eight cities over 6 years.[1] Using a mix of qualitative and quantitative methodologies, we have based our work on the principle that quality research that should be *collaborative* (engaging the communities under study), *contextual* (designed to adapt to local conditions), and *utilization-focused* (capable of being used by communities).

Developing and Refining the Logic Model

Our initial fieldwork, conducted during the first 2 years of our study, included conversations with organizing staff and parent leaders at each of the study sites about their organizations' theories of change. These theory-of-change conversations focused on each group's methodology, in particular the critical organizational activities that lead to the achievement of the organization's social change goals. As an outgrowth of this fieldwork, we went on to create an overarching logic model that illustrated how community organizing activities lead to particular improvements in school capacity for effective instruction and how these improvements, in turn, increase the likelihood of improved student achievement. We published this proposed logic model in our report *Constituents of Change*.[2] Though the report was the result of iterative conversations with the sites, we sought to use the publication not as an "end product" but as a catalyst for further dialogue.

As our research team learns the language of organizing, the organizing groups in our study are also internalizing the vocabulary of research.

In the fall of 2004, at the start of the study's 3rd year, we sought to foster continued dialogue through a research symposium at which community organizers and leaders from the eight study sites revisited the model and highlighted the aspects that both fit and clashed with their experiences. To facilitate conversation among symposium participants, we distributed blank, poster-sized templates of the logic model. Using the proposed logic model as a reference, groups filled in the organizing activities and outcomes most relevant to their individual organizations on the templates. This dialogue helped us refine the model and enabled us to launch the next phase of the research—delineating a set of relevant indicators to assess the outcomes identified in the model. The symposium built on our previous attempts to get feedback by providing a valuable opportunity for face-to-face interaction among stakeholders.

Grappling With Outcome Indicators

Our original model had two key sets of outcomes—those that occur for the community organizing group and those that occur within schools and school districts. Initially, we focused on the changes that increase the school's capacity to deliver an effective instructional program. Based on the logic model and informed by the literature, our research team identified and documented each organizing group's campaigns and corresponding indicators of change. Toward the end of the study's 3rd year, we again engaged community organizing groups as we worked to develop and refine our outcome indicators. Because organizers and leaders had already engaged in developing and fine-tuning the initial logic model, grappling with the indicators represented a natural next step.

During this phase of the project, our conversations with representatives from the sites added nuance and specificity to the indicators framework. For example, one of our proposed indicators was defined as "a decrease in disciplinary actions" within the school. Through our conversations with organizers, however, we learned that in some cases schools were too lax in enforcing discipline, while others were too strict. Consequently, we revised this indicator to read as "more appropriate implementation of discipline policies" in order to reflect the organizing group's work more accurately. While most of our conversations occurred with organizing staff, many of the organizers to whom we spoke said that they intended to share the spreadsheets documenting the indicators with their parent and youth leaders for additional feedback. This feedback, when relayed back to us, will allow the indicators framework to reflect multiple layers of input.

Developing a set of indicators rooted in the original logic model has proven to be a time-consuming and detail-oriented task. Yet it is clear that as our research team learns the language of organizing, the organizing groups in our study are also internalizing the vocabulary of research. Now, 4 years into our 6-year project, we believe that this mutual learning process is due, in large part, to an approach that strives to be conscious of collaboration, context, and utilization. As a result, we have been able to generate a logic model and an indicators framework grounded in both research and practice—one that will authentically inform the next steps of our research.

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1. This research is generously funded by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

2. Mediratta, K. (2004). *Constituents of change: Community organizations and public education reform*. New York: New York University, Institute for Education and Social Policy. www.nyu.edu/iesp/publications/cip/Mott%20Report%20Final.pdf

The Trenton Central High School Obesity Prevention Project: Encouraging Democracy Through Inclusion

Katrina Bledsoe of the College of New Jersey writes about the inclusion of student voices in the evaluation of an obesity prevention program.

Programs operating in community-based and school settings are often focused on providing needed services to those whose voices and ideas are not prominent in the program's development and evaluative stages. Funders and philanthropists often want to obtain good information using the evaluative process but do not always engage in a democratic process; at times they may be somewhat dictatorial. They require organizations to demonstrate they have collected certain information, and if that information is not available, then their funding may be in jeopardy. Yet, funders should avoid being dictatorial about evaluation practices—not because their perceptions of what information is appropriate to collect are incorrect but because they may not understand the underlying existing conditions that compromise the collection of that information.

Deliberative democratic evaluation is an approach that incorporates the democratic process within the evaluation and allows for the inclusion of a variety of opinions, views, and experiences.[1] The principles of democratic evaluation can be used to enhance the inclusion of underserved groups and aid in the eradication of inaccurate programming based on stereotypes and preconceived perceptions of the consumers and their needs.

We actively sought to broaden the stakeholders to include students. In bimonthly focus groups, students' voices provided information to program designers that prevented program strategies from being insensitive to cultural and socioeconomic differences.

Much of the work we have conducted with the Trenton Central High School (TCHS) Obesity Prevention Project follows the principles of democratic evaluation, especially those that encourage inclusion and dialogue of all levels of stakeholders. The project is sponsored by the Trenton Teacher's Network (TTN) of New Jersey, a group within the school district that includes constituents from the faculty and staff from TCHS, local public health organizations, community-based organizations, and the College of New Jersey.

The objective of the project is the prevention of adolescent obesity. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have estimated that 20% of U.S. adolescents are obese (having a body mass index [BMI] of at least 30).[2] TCHS' ethnically diverse population of Black and Latino students seems to be more at risk than the national average. Of the baseline data acquired thus far, 33% are considered overweight (having a BMI at least 25) and another 33% are considered obese.

TTN addressed the students' overweight and obesity problem with a prevention program focusing on healthy eating and exercise. The program consists of three components: physical (teaching students to exercise regularly), psychological (making students understand their eating habits), and educational (teaching students to make healthy food and eating choices). The components are executed through a variety of strategies, such as implementing walking clubs, encouraging students to keep food journals, and holding a screening of the documentary *Super Size Me*.

The intervention is not without its challenges. Although TTN recognized the obesity problem in the high school, they seemed to have some difficulty in ascertaining the underlying reasons for the problem, partly due to a wide cultural divide. TTN is predominately composed of White and non-Trenton residents, a very different makeup than the targeted students. Similarly, the city itself is a socioeconomically challenged state capital in one of the wealthiest counties in the state of New Jersey. Thus, it has been crucial to understand the community context both culturally and economically.

Given the disparity between TTN and the students, we actively sought to broaden the stakeholders to include students. In bimonthly focus groups, their voices provided information to program designers that prevented program strategies from being insensitive to cultural and socioeconomic differences. Through these focus groups, we gained an understanding of what might be an effective program design and by extension a fair and representative program evaluation. For example, students told us that body image was less of a health motivator for Blacks and Latinos than for Whites. This has affected the approach we have used in presenting material about obesity; during our screening of *Super Size Me*, we focused on physical health (e.g., high cholesterol, high blood pressure) rather than presentation of that health (e.g., looking thin).

Although students do not officially serve on TTN, focus groups include student voices and help create a form of indirect dialogue; high level stakeholders ask questions in response to the findings of the focus groups, and students provide answers and suggestions for appropriate program design. In the coming months student leaders in the program will be asked to review and comment on evaluation instruments prior to their administration.

The principles of democratic evaluation have been helpful in fostering an inclusive environment for evaluation of the Trenton project and have encouraged a more equitable process in which the voices of the underserved are heard.

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1. House, E. R., & Howe, K. R. (2000). *Deliberative democratic evaluation checklist*. Retrieved August 18, 2005, from http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/checklists/dd_checklist.htm
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2005). *BMI - Body mass index*. Retrieved August 18, 2005, from http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/bmi/index.htm

How does evaluation create options to enhance social justice?

Saville Kushner of the Centre for Research in Education and Democracy at the University of the West of England suggests ways that an evaluation's participants can make evaluations more democratic.

It is 25 years since Ernest House started writing about social justice in evaluation[1] and 30 years since Barry MacDonald promoted his model of democratic evaluation.[2] These men were linked—not only by their close personal friendship but by the interconnection of their themes. Social justice has to do with how we distribute social goods; democracy is about the way we agree on the criteria for fair distribution of social goods—basically, who gets a say and what clout their word carries.

House and MacDonald argued that social justice and democracy define both the goals of evaluation and its roles, i.e., what evaluation is designed for and what it is expected to do in particular situations. House went on to argue that all evaluation methodologies represent choices about how to see and differentiate the world, and, as such, methodologies embody assumptions about social justice. The choice of how to measure people's actions and accomplishments is more than the application of appropriate method; it is the mobilization of certain assumptions about people and their right to access to evaluation. MacDonald argued that each program evaluation is a case study of political culture in that each program enacts societal structures of power and authority and raises questions about general societal rights. His model of evaluation defined a democratic practice of information exchange and inclusion, regulated by democratic principles of procedure. He modeled evaluation on democratic civic life.

Nowadays it is hard to sustain a conversation about program evaluation without addressing democracy and social justice. Evaluation has been overtaken by social change.

At the time, neither House nor MacDonald sparked debate other than among a few like-minded evaluation theorists. Nowadays it is hard to sustain a conversation about program evaluation without addressing democracy and social justice. Evaluation has been overtaken by social change. From its earliest days as a practice and a discipline, evaluation has positioned itself in relation to power—government is its main sponsor. It has served government, though also sought to act as its conscience. Now we live in Western societies characterized by a crisis in public trust; there are growing gaps in mutual understanding and tolerance between government, corporations, and citizens; more assertive governments—progressive technocracies, perhaps—are preoccupied with exerting sufficient control to enforce loyalty to their policies, often irrespective of the priorities of their electorate.

1. House, E. (1980). *Evaluating with validity*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
2. MacDonald, B. (1976). Evaluation and the control of education. In D. Tawney (Ed.), *Curriculum evaluation today: Trends and implications* (pp. 125–136). London: Macmillan.

There are signs that evaluation, in response, is seeking to reposition itself and draw closer to communities and corporations in collaborative relationships—constrained, of course, by the fact that both lack resources and often organization. If evaluation can help rebuild public trust and improve understanding between government, corporations, and citizens, it is best off starting at the electoral base. Part of this repositioning is its claim to be democratic. What, then, might be your expectations of evaluation, claiming to be democratic, when it is *them* coming to evaluate *you*? What part do you play? Where possible, I suggest that you:

1. ***Insist that we evaluators negotiate our ethics.*** Don't be content with a consent letter or certification from an ethics review body. Insist that we evaluators express your views and priorities as you choose to frame them. But insist, too, on your confidentiality until you are content to release your data. Remember, you are the sole owner of data on your life and work.

2. ***Assert your rights to help shape the evaluation agenda.*** Your questions should have the same status as anyone's. If it's about your life and work, the evaluation belongs to you as much as to our sponsors. Remember, your viewpoint (as a professional or a citizen) may not be liked, but is undeniable.

3. ***Make methodological demands on us to portray you and your work as you feel it needs to be represented.*** Don't just accept our (or our sponsor's) choice of method.

4. ***Insist on seeing and having the right to comment on a draft of our report.*** However, don't worry about seeing a transcript of your interview.

5. ***Ask us to be explicit about the criteria against which we or those who we report to make judgments about your work or your program.*** Question the criteria that are unfair to or ignore your accomplishments.

Above all, remember that democratic evaluators have aspirations which go beyond our constraints. We have a tendency to promise more than conditions allow us to deliver; we often appear more democratic when negotiating access than we are ultimately able to be when it comes to reporting. The more support democratic evaluators have from you, the more leverage we can exert against the constraints of our contracts.

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How can evaluation address racial equity?

Sally Leiderman, President of the Center for Assessment and Policy Development, explains how evaluation can be a tool to help communities and their partners do work in racial equity.

For me, racial equity refers to a vision of communities in which one's race or ethnicity does not act as the most powerful predictor of how one fares. Race, along with socioeconomic status, is one of the strongest statistical predictors of outcomes such as life expectancy, student achievement, and wealth accumulation. Racism, oppression, privilege, and access to power always influence evaluation.

To help people think about this, one of the questions we ask in designing an evaluation is "what constitutes success—and who says so?" What constitutes effective parenting that supports the success of children in a racist world? What kinds of community processes support leaders who can challenge the policies and practices of institutions that maintain privilege? Does collaboration among existing systems ever lead to genuine change in the distribution of power or resources?

People's ideas about what outcomes matter in evaluation are part of their worldviews, which are shaped by White privilege and internalized superiority and racism, by training and life experiences, and by the credence they give to different ways of knowing. Evaluations only rarely attend to incorporating these different worldviews. As evaluators, we help maintain the status quo unless we take into account these different perspectives.

We must find ways to shift the relationship from "professional evaluators" to a situation in which everyone in a community is an evaluator in his or her own right.

The Center for Assessment and Policy Development, along with Maggie Potapchuk of MP Associates, Inc., recently developed a website that collects in one place information about how to do evaluations that attend to these issues. We hope that community groups and others will use the website for many different kinds of evaluations but especially those aimed at reducing racism, privilege, or oppression.

The Evaluation Tools for Racial Equity website (www.evaluationtoolsforracialequity.org) is organized around the typical stages that a community group or coalition working on racial justice issues might go through in planning, conducting, and using evaluation. Each stage of the tool offers guiding questions, tip sheets, checklists, worksheets, and examples of real-life ways groups have used evaluation in their racial equity and inclusion work.

The Evaluation Tools for Racial Equity website is a modest attempt to shift the power dynamics in evaluation from privileged institutions and "experts" in evaluation toward groups of color and individual communities. We have tried to offer specific ways to reduce the privilege and racism in evaluation and to address the kinds of issues that communities often face with evaluation.

For example, to address the common situation where people see the evaluation findings' poor outcomes and "blame the victim" for these outcomes, one of the tip sheets offers ideas about how to present findings in ways that make institutional causes of individual outcomes very clear—such as including data about the distribution of resources among schools along with information about how children perform on standardized tests.

In order for evaluation to address racial equity on a wider scale, I suggest the following:

1. ***Diversify the evaluation field.*** We must work harder to bring people of color and people with different perspectives about the role of evaluation into the evaluation field at all levels. We need to value many different kinds of preparation for evaluation—academic, applied, and lived experience in communities.

2. ***Train evaluators in understanding racial equity.*** It is the responsibility of evaluators who work in communities to obtain training in and understanding of institutional structural racism, how this differs from bias and prejudice, and a clear understanding of White privilege.

3. ***Support retrospective work.*** We have not solved White privilege or racism in the United States and do not know what it will take to do that. Our ability to know what we need to do in the short-term to achieve certain results in the long term is therefore quite limited. We need to engage in much more retrospective work regarding specific past accomplishments toward creating racial equity to find out which indicators are likely to predict success.

4. ***Create opportunities for collegial conversations.*** I have learned some of my most important lessons from talking with people, mostly of color, who have had the patience to help me see what I have not been seeing. If evaluators and those who work in the name of racial equity could come together to talk in collegial environments about cultural racism and how it plays out, evaluations of racial equity might flourish.

5. ***Think about evaluation as a populist activity.*** We must find ways to shift the relationship from "professional evaluators" to a situation in which everyone in a community is an evaluator in his or her own right. This can be achieved as communities and evaluators share what they know and are open to what they do not know.

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> new & noteworthy

This section features an annotated list of papers, organizations, initiatives, and other resources related to the issue's theme.

Adato, M. (2000). ***The impact of PROGRESA on community social relationships***. Washington, DC: International Food Policy Research Institute. This report examines whether a program intended to meet the education, health, and nutrition needs of Mexican families living in extreme poverty contributes to or detracts from the building of social capital. It describes both the social divisions and the strengthening of social relationships created by the program's use of beneficiary and non-beneficiary households. www.ifpri.org/themes/progresa/pdf/Adato_community.pdf

Davies, R., & Dart, J. (2005). ***The 'Most Significant Change' (MSC) technique: A guide to its use.*** Cambridge, UK: MandE NEWS. This participatory evaluation tool uses "significant change stories" from key stakeholder groups to draw lessons about program impact directly from the field. www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.htm

Fraser, H. (2005). **Four different approaches to community participation**. *Community Development Journal, 40*(3), 286–300. This paper explores the political dynamics of community work by examining four basic community participation approaches. Written for the lay community, the paper clarifies some of the differences in participation project design and stimulates discussion about community participation. cdj.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/abstract/40/3/286?etoc

Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network. (2005). ***The GLSEN lunchbox 2, revised edition: A comprehensive training program for ending anti-LGBT bias in schools***. New York: Author. Created by the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN), this tool kit helps educators and community members make schools safe, affirming, and inclusive places for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students. The tool kit includes an in-depth evaluation and analysis of how to change policies and curriculum in order to foster anti-bias environments. www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/educator/library/record/1748.html

Southern Echo, Inc. (n.d.). ***Justice funding: Experimenting with the language of struggle to clarify policy and strategy choices***. Jackson, MS: Author. This working paper explores the concept of "justice funding." Based on the values of the civil rights movement, justice funding looks at adequate educational funding and educational equity through the lens of the historical context, policy development, and decision making at the state and local school district levels and at the delivery of education at the school district level. www.southernecho.org/downloads/justicefunding.doc

New Resources From HFRP

The Family Involvement Network of Educators (FINE) has added two new resources to the FINE website (www.finenetwork.org):

- ***Taking a Closer Look: A Guide to Online Resources on Family Involvement*** compiles and categorizes family involvement resources available online to make them easier to access and use. It contains Web links to research, information, programs, and tools from over 100 national organizations. www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/fine/resources/guide
- The family involvement teaching case, ***After School for Cindy***, explores the role of schools in linking children to community programs. Expert commentaries by Melody Brazo, Cathy Duffy, and Mary Larner accompany the case. www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/fine/resources/teaching-case/cindy.html

Our out-of-school time (OST) team has added seven new profiles of OST program evaluations to the **Out-of-School Time Program Evaluation Database**, and they have updated the profile of the After School Corporation (TASC) evaluation. They have also added 25 new citations of OST program evaluation reports to our **Out-of-School Time Program Evaluation Bibliography** and updated 15 of the citations already in the bibliography. www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/evaldatabase.html

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